

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-10, 12-13, 15-16, 18 and 21 are pending in the present application.

Claim 1 is independent. Claims 24-30 are canceled.

The Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 1-3, 5, 7-10, 12-13, 15-16, 18 and 21 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Claims 24-30 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Masaki (JP 10-83622). Claims 24-30 have been canceled and therefore this rejection is moot.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests removal of this rejection.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-3, 5, 7-10, 12-13, 15-16, 18 and 21 are allowable, and that the application as a whole is in condition for allowance. Early and favorable notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

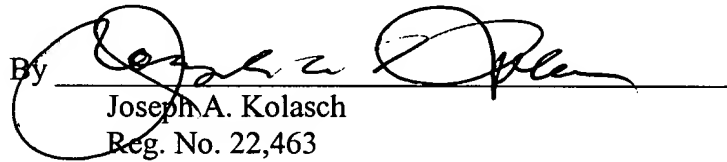
In the event that any matters remain at issue in the application, the Examiner is invited to contact Jayne Saydah (Reg. No. 48,796) at (703) 205-8000 in the Northern Virginia area, for the purpose of a telephonic interview.

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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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